

## **Historic, Archive Document**

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



a 52/  
A87F3

5

# **Farm Broadcasters Letter**



United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington, D.C. 20250 (202) 720-4330

Letter No. 2575

September 11, 1992

**AG DISASTER FUNDS** -- Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan toured areas in Florida and Louisiana damaged by Hurricane Andrew. He surveyed Federal food relief efforts, and presented crop insurance claim checks totaling \$2.5 million to nursery crop growers in the Homestead, FL area who suffered catastrophic losses. Damage payment checks have been presented to other growers by private insurance companies reinsured by USDA's Federal Crop Insurance Corporation. "Crop insurance payments make a big difference to growers who need relief to meet their obligations and reestablish their crops," Madigan said. **Contact: Roger Runnigen (202) 720-4623.**

**AG EMERGENCY FUNDS** -- Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan says that the \$755 million in emergency funds for agricultural disasters announced by President Bush can apply to program crop losses incurred in 1990, 1991, and 1992. This is in addition to the \$995 million disaster assistance for 1990-91 crops announced by Madigan earlier this year. Application period for disaster claims for fall-seeded program crops planted in 1991 and harvested in 1992 began Sept. 8 and will end Oct. 2. The application period for producers with losses on other 1992 crops, and for producers with losses from 1990 or 1991 crops who did not previously receive disaster payments for those losses, will begin Oct. 13 and end Feb. 12, 1993. **Contact: Roger Runnigen (202) 720-4623.**

**THE LARGEST EEP** -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture has made available 1.1 billion bushels of U.S. wheat to 28 countries and regions under the Export Enhancement Program (EEP). The new export package is worth over \$3 billion and will support 100,000 additional U.S. jobs. "This EEP package will be especially important in maintaining U.S. wheat exports and in supporting U.S. wheat prices in light of our increased 1992 wheat crop," says Ann M. Veneman, deputy secretary of agriculture. "By directly challenging EC prices on a destination-by-destination basis we are sending a strong message to the EC and other subsidizers that we are committed to making sure U.S. wheat producers and exporters remain competitive in world markets," Veneman says. The new initiative will remain in effect until June 30, 1993. **Contact: Roger Runnigen (202) 720-4623.**

**CONCENTRATION** -- Although most farmland is owned by farm operators, the share held by owners who are not farm operators has nearly doubled in the last 40 years from 22 to 41 percent. During this period, the number of farms and farm operators has declined more rapidly than the number of farmland owners, and the number of owners has fallen to its lowest level in this century. There are about 2 million farms and 3 million farm owners. "If current trends continue, there will be 1.7 million farms operators and 2.7 million farmland owners by the year 2000," says Gene Wunderlich of USDA's Economic Research Service. Owners of 1,000-plus acres of farmland total about 4 percent of all owners, and hold 47 percent of all land in U.S. farms and ranches. **Contact: Gene Wunderlich (202) 219-0425.**

**TRAINING WASPS** -- Scientists with USDA's Agricultural Research Service have discovered that a chemical released by plants when caterpillars begin to feed, can be used to train wasps to remain in an area and protect the plants. The plant distress call is a combination of volatile chemicals, called terpenoids, that parasitic wasps use as a beacon to lead them to caterpillars. The wasps lay an egg inside the caterpillar. The egg develops into a larva and eats the caterpillar. Next step is to see if genetic engineering can help the plants produce higher levels of terpenoids to better lure the beneficial wasps. **Contact: James Tumlinson (904) 374-5730.**

**RESPONDING TO PRICES** -- Spring wheat producers responded to relatively high prices at planting time by sowing an estimated 28 percent more acres. But the winter wheat crop turned out better than expected, making U.S. wheat supplies for 1992/93 down only slightly from a year earlier. With domestic use and exports forecast down from 1991/92, the season average farm price is forecast at \$2.80 to \$3.20 per bushel, compared with \$3.00 in 1991/92. **Contact: Ed Allen (202) 219-0840.**

**APPLE RECOVERY** -- The 1991/92 marketing year which ended in June has been phenomenal for U.S. apple exports, with records set for volume and value. Exports totaled 514,000 tons, up 43 percent from last year. Sales rang up at \$320 million, up 42 percent from the previous year. **Contact: Billy Cox (202) 720-3930.**

**COTTON YIELD UP** -- The national average cotton yield is forecast at 696 pounds per harvested acre, up 44 pounds from last year and the second highest on record. U.S. cotton production in 1992 is estimated at 16.5 million bales, down from 17.6 million in 1991. Planted area declined 5 percent this year to 13.4 million acres, but growers expect to harvest only 11.4 million acres primarily because of acreage abandonment in Texas due to cool, wet spring weather. **Contact: Bob Skinner (202) 219-0841.**

**SPEAKING OF COTTON** -- The optimal growth temperature for cotton is 82 degrees. Scientists with USDA's Agricultural Research Service have also found that if cotton is drip irrigated when leaf temperature hits 82, yields are the same as cotton irrigated weekly but water use is less than half. They found that when three-day-cycle sprinkler irrigation was delayed one day, whenever leaf temperature did not exceed 82 degrees for more than 2.5 hours, more cotton was produced. Next year, scientists will see if they can save more water without harming yields by letting cotton plants stay thirsty for several hours. **Contact: Donald Wanjura (806) 746-5353.**

**KEEPING IT OFF** -- Eating regular meals, especially breakfast, is important for long-term weight control. "If a person eats regularly they are more likely to control the total amount eaten in a day," says Sue Butkus, Washington State University Cooperative Extension nutrition specialist. "When people skip breakfast, they tend to eat large quantities of food late in the afternoon and evening to reward themselves for skipping breakfast." **Contact: Sue Butkus (509) 335-2823.**

*R-TV Fax: (202) 690-2165  
Ag NewsFAX (202) 690-3944*

## FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

**AGRICULTURE USA # 1840** -- On this edition **Brenda Curtis** talks with a USDA research geneticist about his work developing potential alternative crops. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

**CONSUMER TIME # 1322** -- Nutrition: what do kids know?; searching for a better chicken; building a better orange; eating for a healthy heart; what causes fish kills? (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

**AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1831** -- Barter for the former USSR; the executive loan program; phasing out streamlined cattle inspections; salty soils from irrigation. (Weekly reel of news features.)

**NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1537** -- Leanness & reproduction; embryo transfer savings; centrifuging cow eggs; freezing boar semen; gene therapy. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

**UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE** -- Mon., Sept. 21, catfish production, U.S. ag trade update; Tues., Sept. 22, crop/weather update, sugar outlook; Wed., Sept. 23, citrus production, aquaculture outlook; Fri., Sept. 25, livestock/poultry update.

These are the **USDA** reports we know about in advance. Our Newsline carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup. Please don't let the lack of a story listing keep you from calling.

**DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE (202) 488-8358 or 8359.**

Material changed at 5 p.m., EDT, each working day.

## FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

**FEATURES** -- **Patrick O'Leary** reports on Opportunity L.A.; **John Snyder** takes a look at farm-raised shrimp imports.

**ACTUALITIES** -- USDA chief meteorologist **Norton Strommen** on weather and crops; USDA world board chairman **James Donald** on the latest crop production estimates; USDA economist **Ed Allen** on wheat production; USDA economist **Joel Greene** on agricultural exports; USDA economist **Terri Raney** on farm exports to East Asia.

**UPCOMING FEATURES** -- **DeBoria Janifer** reports on crawfish farming; **Patrick O'Leary** reports on the fall color hotline; **Lynn Wyvill** reviews annual medics, a new crop.

**EVERY OTHER WEEK** -- **Agriculture Update**, five minutes of USDA farm program information in "news desk" format with B-roll.

*Available on Satellite Galaxy 6, channel 23, audio 6.2 or 6.8, downlink frequency 4160 MHz.: Thursdays from 7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EDT, Saturdays from 10 - 10:30 a.m., EDT, and Mondays from 8 - 8:30 a.m., EDT.*



## OFFMIKE

**CARAVAN...**of 15 vehicles took food and nonperishable supplies to hurricane damaged Dade County, FL, says **Rod Hemphill** (Florida Farm Bureau Network, Gainesville). Rod says the crew confronted two major difficulties: there was little communication available to tell people where the supplies were located, and there was no transportation available to bring people to the distribution points. Rod says Hurricane Andrew hit rural areas with force powerful enough to twist the I-beam girders in flattened packing houses. Ground was being prepared for fall vegetable planting, but with no way to pack, cool and ship their product, many producers doubt whether they should plant. Rod says fall vegetables are a \$60 million business in Dade County. Salt water inundated rural areas. Growers must wait to determine if it affects production.

**A VERY COLD WINTER...**is the coffee shop talk in Kansas, says **Steve Stein** (KGNO, Dodge City, KS). Producers say they believe the coolness this summer will last into winter. Ground moisture has been good all summer, and very little irrigation was needed for corn and milo, helping conditions for winter wheat planting.

### *Farm Broadcasters Letter*



Office of Public Affairs  
Radio-TV Division  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington, D.C. 20250-1300

---

OFFICIAL BUSINESS  
Penalty for Private Use \$300

**WHITEFLY...**damage was extensive in southern Texas this year, but less than last year, says **Jim Hearn** (KURV, Edinburg, TX). Wetness, cool temperatures, and removal of damaged crops that serve as hosts, kept insect numbers down. Fall vegetables are growing nicely, but Jim notices that acreage is down. Jim says that full reservoirs are helping to boost producer attitudes.

**HIGHEST NUMBERS EVER...**is the way **Charles Kampa** (KBRF, Fergus Falls, MN) described 4-H and FFA participation at county fairs in his area. Charles says both the number of exhibits and the number of kids attending were substantially increased compared to last year.

**AT THE FOUR COUNTY FAIRS...**covered by **Cliff Mitchell** (KASM, Albany, MN) the number of 4-H participants was higher than previous years. But Cliff says it's too early to determine if it represents a renewed interest among the young in farming.

**VIC POWELL**  
Chief, Radio and TV Division